

The collective and individual expressions of humour in social media spaces: insights from the socio-political context of Jordan after the 2011 Arab Spring

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This article seeks to establish a theoretical framework for considering how the collective and individual expressions of humour in social media spaces have been used and presented in the socio-political context of Jordan after the 2011 Arab Spring. This framework moves from the collective to the individual and makes Mikhail Bakhtin and Sigmund Freud complementary to the study of Jordanian social media humour after the Arab Spring. It argues that Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of carnival and the carnivalesque (folk humour) have a functional similarity to Sigmund Freud's theory of humour (release theory) because both seem to agree on the role of repression to influence the production of humour. Although repression is being understood differently (for Bakhtin it is political repression, which is usually a conscious decision, while for Freud it is self-repression, which is usually unconscious), humour can provide us with a strong mechanism for overcoming repression, or at least, giving the individual or the crowd the impression that they are challenging repression without necessarily challenging the status quo i.e., calling for regime change or revolution.

More Information

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